

# the road less taken

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The travels of Ryuko Matoi right as she arrives at Honno City.

Status: ongoing

Published: 2019-03-19

Words: 374

Rated: Fiction K+ - Language: English - Favs: 2 - Follows: 1

Original source: <https://www.fanfiction.net/s/13238329/1/the-road-less-taken>

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Billowing, unchanging landscape of hills littered with clovers and weeds and overgrown greenery almost three feet high, of trees with winding, gnarled branches reaching for the sky and blooming flowers surrounds Ryuko.

She's totally alone, and has been since her dad was killed all those moons ago. She is alone, save for her thoughts, not a lick of civilization in sight. Buildings are a relic of her past that might have been a figment of her imagination. It's mighty lonesome out here in the wilderness. Ryuko can do well enough without people, that much is true. But there's a point where she crosses into isolationist territory. Frankly, she's been at this point for a while, she probably crossed many lines of socially and emotionally appropriate actions a long while back. Those were the days stretched into weeks in the blink of an eye that too quickly turns loneliness.

She has nothing to hold on to, and bone-rattling, searing loneliness she felt nagging at the back of her head should've broken Ryuko's heart. It didn't. She has to trek on; there is no other option. Stone cold revenge sits heavy on her heart, a once complete organ that now has no chance of being repaired.

Is Ryuko being dramatic? Absolutely. To be fair, Ryuko has every right; there is no one out here to judge her, to know what she's been through, to understand the struggles she fights to even the playing field.

Most importantly, Ryuko misses running water, three consistent meals, and a place to sleep that wasn't a literal hole in the ground. These were once necessities but are now mere luxuries.

Oh how she misses the luxury of civilization, and it feels perpetually out of her reach. If karma exists, it certainly has an awful sense of humor taking its anger out on a girl who never asked for it.

Signs of humanity begin to abruptly arrive as the sun sets, and Ryuko notices a strange, crudely made sign. It reads: Honno City.

What does this place have in store for her? Who knows, Ryuko thinks as she strolls upon the dirt path as if she owned the place. What's the worst that could happen: find the man who killed her dad?